

## Post-Surgical Instructions

### Cleaning your teeth.

Do not clean your teeth or gums in the area of surgery for one week. The rest of the teeth may be brushed as usual, but *do not floss any teeth for one week*. After brushing, gently rinse with water and then *Peridex® (Perioguard, Chlorhexidine Gluconate)* for 30 seconds. Some mild staining of the teeth may occur from the rinse.

### Swelling.

Some swelling is common following periodontal procedures. You can use an ice pack on your cheek to help control the swelling. But if you have had a gingival graft procedure please do not use any ice for swelling.

### Discomfort.

You can expect some discomfort for a week or two. The following medications will help make you more comfortable.

***Ibuprofen.*** This is a very effective pain reliever when taken on a regular dosing schedule. ***Take 600mg Ibuprofen (3 tablets) every 4 hours*** for the first week after surgery.

It is best taken with food. The most common side effect is a heartburn type of indigestion, which may usually be avoided by taking the medicine with food or with an antacid.

***Hydrocodone with acetaminophen.*** You should: 1) take the hydrocodone in addition to Ibuprofen for additional pain control, 2) start with the lowest dose that will control the discomfort (one tablet), and 3) minimize activity. This medication may make you drowsy and slow your reflexes, and make you nauseous. Following dosing instructions and warnings on prescription bottle.

### Eating.

Eat a soft or liquid diet for the first week or longer if needed. Foods to avoid include:

hard foods (such as chips), hot or spicy food (such as salsa dip) and popcorn. There are many foods that you can eat, including milkshakes, soups, pasta dishes (if not spicy), mashed potatoes and dietary supplements such as *Boost®* or *Camation Instant Breakfast®*. You should drink plenty of fluids.

### Activities.

You will need to restrict your activities for several days after surgery. Avoid unnecessary exertion (aerobic exercise, yard work, sports, swimming), vigorous rinsing, pulling the lip or cheek out to clean the teeth or inspect the surgical site. ***Do not smoke.*** Smoking can cause delayed healing and/or serious infection and failure.

**Sutures (stitches).**

Normally resorbable sutures are used which dissolve and do not require removal. It is common for such sutures to begin to dissolve early in the healing process, sometimes as early as the first day or two. ***If any sutures feel loose, please do not attempt to remove them. Leave them alone and they will dissolve by themselves.*** If a non-resorbable (non dissolving) suture material was used, you will be notified of a post-op date for suture removal.

**Bleeding.**

Bleeding is common following periodontal procedures, especially grafting. You might notice some minor bleeding the day of and the day after surgery. It can be minimized by reducing your activity level. Applying pressure to the area for 10 minutes with sterile gauze and clean hands usually will stop the bleeding. If it does not on the first try, keep applying pressure for another 10-15 minutes.

**Antibiotics.**

If you have been given an antibiotic, please take it until gone. If you have any problems (such as a rash or severe itching) please discontinue use and call for an alternative antibiotic.

**Specific Instructions for procedures:****Sinus grafting.**

This technique is done to help create sufficient bone to allow placement of implants. After sinus grafting procedures, it is common to experience some nasal congestion, headache, pressure under or behind eye or other symptoms of sinusitis. Blood-tinged mucus or sand-like grains in mucus/ throat are also sometimes seen. It is important not to blow the nose or sneeze immediately following the procedure and for a week thereafter. Smoking is absolutely forbidden as it may interfere with healing.

**Implants.**

Dental implants must bond to the bone if they are to be successful. Movement during the healing process may interfere with this. It is very important not to touch or disturb the implant with your tongue or during eating. Avoid brushing or other oral hygiene measures around the implant for two weeks following the procedure.

**Bone grafting.**

Bone grafting is be used to replace or add bone to areas that are deficient. Occasionally small particles may be released, these may feel like small grains of sand in your mouth. This is normal and not a cause for concern.

**Stent/shield.**

A thin plastic shield (also known as a stent) may be provided after gingival grafting. This shield will protect the top of the mouth during healing. The stent should be worn at all times, especially while eating or sleeping.